

REMARKS

By this paper, independent claims 1 and 17 have been amended. Claims 1-19 and 22-34 remain pending.

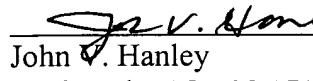
On November 21, 2005, a telephonic interview was conducted with the Examiner. The undersigned wishes to thank the Examiner for participating in the telephonic interview. During the interview, each of the Forkner et al. and Oneda et al. cited patents were discussed in respect of the pending claims. It was agreed that amending independent claims 1 and 17 to include the concept that the recited elongated optical fiber extends substantially a length of the internal chamber of the elongated shaft appeared to overcome the teachings of the Oneda et al. reference. Accordingly, claims 1 and 17 have been amended as discussed.

Moreover, Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 17 to recite that the recited ferrule is in direct contact with the recited optical fiber. As such, it is believed that independent claims 1 and 17 as well as their respective dependent claims are allowable over the cited Forkner et al. patent.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that each of examined claims 1-9, 17, 19 and 31-34 are allowable over the cited art.

Respectfully submitted,

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